

## Hypocoristic Names In Hausa

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**Abstract.** This paper describes hypocoristic forms of personal names in Hausa. There are seven different hypocoristic types, some of which can be combined with one another. Six types employ segmental suffixes and one type is formed by partial reduplication. Some of the types display an overall tonal melody; others simply add a tonally fixed affix to a basic name with its inherent tone. The hypocoristic types differ both in their affective/emotive connotations and in who uses them.

**1. Introduction.** Hypocoristic (henceforth HC) formation involves modification in a given name, by affixation or reduplication, in order to indicate attitudinal information about the affection of the speaker toward the person referred to. HC forms are referred to variously as pet names, fondling endings, terms of endearment, diminutives, effeminate diminutives, and familiarity markers. Sometimes, the HC form portrays both the affection of the speaker and the diminutive nature of the referent. For example, *Sàaleele*, the HC form of the Hausa name *Saalè*, connotes 'my dear little Sale'. The phenomenon is very similar to the suffixation in English of *-y* or *-ie* to names in order to express affection toward or the smallness of the person or thing referred to, e.g. *Bob* → *Bobby*, *dad* → *daddy*, *dog* → *doggie*, etc. The register in which HC forms fall has often been described as "baby talk" (e.g., Ferguson 1977; Bynon 1977). Although this may be true to some extent, it is important to keep in mind that hypocoristics and baby talk refer to related, and not identical, phenomena.

The existence of hypocoristics has long been recognized in a wide range of languages, whether the phenomenon has been systematically studied or not. Languages in which it has been reported include English (e.g., Jespersen 1923; Quirk et al. 1985; Baron 1986); European languages such as Russian, Latvian, and Dutch (Fokker 1960; Ruġe-Draviņa 1977; Wierzbicka 1992); various Far-Eastern languages such as Japanese and Korean (Poser 1984; Lee 1992); and even Elamite, an ancient language of the Near East (Zadok 1983). Somehow, HC formation seems to have escaped the attention of Africanists.<sup>1</sup>

In Hausa, one of the best-investigated African languages, personal names have been studied by numerous scholars over a long period of time (Abraham 1941; Kirk-Greene 1964; A. B. Yusuf 1973, 1979; H. A. Yusuf 1977; Ryan 1981; Daba 1987). In spite of this, HC formation in the language has been totally neglected. The purpose of this paper is to rectify the omission by providing a

basic description of hypocoristics in Hausa. It is, as far as we are aware, the first attempt to identify, describe, and analyze the phenomenon in this language. The main focus of the paper will be on the formation of HC names, but we will provide some brief comments on semantic/pragmatic characteristics, an area that requires a full study of its own.

**2. Overview of Hausa hypocoristics.** A selection of examples illustrating HC forms in Hausa is given in (1), where *m* indicates a masculine name and *f* a feminine name.<sup>2</sup>

(1) Hausa names and their hypocoristic variants

| TYPE | REGULAR NAME   | HC VARIANT          | REGULAR NAME     | HC VARIANT          |
|------|----------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| A    | Yaarò <i>m</i> | Yàarooro <i>m</i>   | Bintù <i>f</i>   | Bintuutu <i>f</i>   |
| B    | Gārba <i>m</i> | Gārbaatii <i>m</i>  | Yālwa <i>m/f</i> | Yālwaatii <i>f</i>  |
| C    | Sandà <i>m</i> | Sandaloo <i>m</i>   | Habiibà <i>f</i> | Habiibaloo <i>f</i> |
| D    | Yaa'ù <i>m</i> | Yaa'ulle <i>m</i>   | Hajiyaa <i>f</i> | Hajiyalle <i>f</i>  |
| E    | Baawà <i>m</i> | Baawale <i>m</i>    | Uwa <i>f</i>     | Uwàale <i>f</i>     |
| F    | Bàaba <i>m</i> | Bàabàndi <i>m</i>   |                  |                     |
| G    | Kàbir <i>m</i> | Kàbiiŕuwaa <i>m</i> | Hànnatù <i>f</i> | Hànnatùwaa <i>f</i> |

Items A–G represent different formation types. Before turning to them individually, a few essential points need to be made about Hausa hypocoristics in general.

First, HC forms in Hausa occur exclusively with proper names (although the names themselves may be derived from kinship terms or common nouns). Unlike many other languages, in which HC forms commonly relate to more general diminutive formatives that can also be used with kin terms, animal names, and such,<sup>3</sup> in Hausa, HC forms are restricted to people's names.

Second, the names that have corresponding HC forms—and not all do—run the gamut of Hausa names and do not belong to any specific type. There are Islamic/Old Testament names (e.g., *Hànnatù* 'Hannah'); names derived from kin terms (e.g., *Uwa* < *uwaa* 'mother'); day names (e.g., *Jummai* < *Jumma'aa* 'Friday'); and names reflecting titles (e.g., *Hajiyaa* 'a woman who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca').

Third, in cases where the normal name is epicene, the HC variant is invariably restricted to one gender or the other, e.g., *Yālwa* male or female name, but *Yālwaatii* [HC] female only; *Kàaka* male or female name, but *Kàakalè* [HC] male only.

Fourth, HC forms of names are mainly used by adults or older children in addressing or sometimes referring to younger children. That is to say, the usage is unidirectional, operating vertically in a descending order from parents or other adults to children, and never in an ascending order like the English *daddy* and *mommy*, which children use to address their parents. The hypocor-

ristic forms *Bàabalè* and *Ìyàale* (cf. *Bàaba* and *Iyà*, the normal address terms for father and mother, respectively) should not mislead us here, because these names are used in accordance with Hausa cultural rules of name avoidance. Since one normally does not use the names of one's (or one's spouse's) parents, uncles, and other senior relatives, a child who is named after such a relative cannot be addressed by that name. A child given the name of one's father, e.g., *Bellò*, could thus not be addressed as *Bellò*, but rather would be called by an alternative designation such as *Bàaba* 'father' or a hypocoristic variant of that name. Thus, the HC kinship names are not baby talk terms for parents, but rather are HC names for children.

The hypocoristics can also be used horizontally between children. In addition, a person who grows up bearing an HC name may find that the name sticks throughout his or her lifetime, i.e., the name continues to be used even when the person is no longer a young child.<sup>4</sup> When these forms are used in an adult-to-child situation, they express warmth, affection, etc. When in a child-to-child setting, on the other hand, the HC forms may constitute an unmarked term of address or reference without necessarily carrying the affective connotations. When used in an adult-to-adult context, as is possible, they tend to have a humorous, playful, or disparaging effect (cf. Ferguson 1977:234), unless the name has become fixed as the neutral name for that person.

Fifth, Hausa names, like those in English and Russian, commonly have shortened variants, and, as in these other languages, the Hausa HC forms are most often built on the short names. For example, the HC form *Mùddeede* derives from *Mùdde*, the short form of *Mustàphaa*, while *Aa'íloo* and *Shatù-waa* derive from *Aa'ì* and *Shatù*, respectively, both being short forms of *Aa'ish-aatù*.

**3. Types of HC forms in Hausa.** Hausa differs from many other languages in the large number of different morphological formations it makes use of when creating different types of HC names. Not only are different types used for different names, but some names allow a number of alternative HC forms. We will now describe the various HC formation types. In each case, the examples presented represent the full list of names that we have found so far using the formation in question (see Appendix).

**3.1. Type A: suffixal reduplication.** This type, shown in (2) below, is derived by partial reduplication operating on the final syllable. In the HC form, the resultant penultimate vowel is invariably long and the final vowel is short, regardless of the length of the non-HC name.<sup>5</sup> Disyllabic words with a heavy first syllable, either CVV or CVC, exhibit a regular LHH tone pattern, e.g., *Yàarooro*, *Bintuutu*.<sup>6</sup> Words with more than two syllables also manifest the regular LH melody, e.g., *Ümmàřuuřu*. Disyllabic words with a light first syllable behave tonally in a different manner. Although the sample is too small to

generalize confidently—there are only three such forms (*Bàlaa*, *Inuu*, and *Kulù*)—it appears that these words add the reduplicative syllable with a set H tone, but preserve the lexical tone rather than having it overridden by the LH melody. The other irregularity in this reduplicative pattern concerns the final vowel: there are no HC forms with final *-aaCa*. The few names with final *-a(a)* replace the vowel with *-e* before undergoing the reduplicative process, e.g., *Bàlaa* → *Bàleele*, not \**Bàlaala*. The alternative HC form *Àdoodoo* (= *Àduudu*), which comes from *Audù*, is a totally unexpected irregularity.

(2) Type A: suffixal reduplication

| REGULAR NAME |          | HC VARIANT |          | REGULAR NAME |          | HC VARIANT  |          |
|--------------|----------|------------|----------|--------------|----------|-------------|----------|
| Àlhajì       | <i>m</i> | Àlhàjìjì   | <i>m</i> | Ìyàale       | <i>f</i> | Ìyàaleele   | <i>f</i> |
| Àamadù       | <i>m</i> | Àamàduudu  | <i>m</i> | Kulù         | <i>f</i> | Kulùulu     | <i>f</i> |
| Audù         | <i>m</i> | Àduudu     | <i>m</i> | Laadi        | <i>f</i> | Làadiidi    | <i>f</i> |
| Audù         | <i>m</i> | Àdoodoo    | <i>m</i> | Màatii       | <i>m</i> | Màatiiti    | <i>m</i> |
| Bàlaa        | <i>m</i> | Bàleele    | <i>m</i> | Mùdde        | <i>m</i> | Mùddeede    | <i>m</i> |
| Bellò        | <i>m</i> | Bèlloolo   | <i>m</i> | Saalè        | <i>m</i> | Sàaleele    | <i>m</i> |
| Bintù        | <i>f</i> | Bintuutu   | <i>f</i> | Ùbaalè       | <i>m</i> | Ùbàaleele   | <i>m</i> |
| Ilà          | <i>m</i> | Ìleele     | <i>m</i> | Ùmmàkàtii    | <i>f</i> | Ùmmàkàtiiti | <i>f</i> |
| Ìndoo        | <i>f</i> | Ìndoodo    | <i>f</i> | Ùmmařù       | <i>m</i> | Ùmmařuuřu   | <i>m</i> |
| Inuu         | <i>m</i> | Inuunu     | <i>m</i> | Yaarò        | <i>m</i> | Yàarooro    | <i>m</i> |

This HC type is used primarily by females in talking to children, i.e., it fits in with the concept of “baby talk.” It expresses what Wierzbicka (1992:246), describing similar forms in Russian, calls a feeling associated with the world of children, i.e., a miniature version of things in the adult world. Hausa HC names of this form express a mixture of tenderness, playfulness, and endearment, all of which are associated with small children. An adult entering this world and attempting to interact with its inhabitants feels a mixture of these playful and endearing feelings. When adults use the forms with each other, the names carry childish, playful, and nonserious connotations.

**3.2. Type B: suffix *-(aa)tii*.** The B type, in (3) below, is characterized by a suffix *-(aa)tii* and a regular LHH tone melody. (Since all of the words taking this suffix already end in *-a*, it is impossible to know whether the suffix should be analyzed as *-tii*, with prosodic lengthening of the penultimate vowel, or whether one has a fixed *-aatii* suffix.) All of the words employing this suffix are disyllabic and have a heavy first syllable; the resultant HC forms have three consecutive heavy syllables. An indication that this formation belongs to the realm of “expressive” language is the non-palatalization of the *t*. In normal derivation and inflection, *t* automatically palatalizes to *č* (orthographic *c*) when followed by a front vowel *i* or *e*. However, in this HC suffix, as is the case with certain diminutives and other ideophonic adjectives, the *t* remains as is.

(3) Type B: suffix *-(aa)tii*

| REGULAR NAME   | HC VARIANT         | REGULAR NAME     | HC VARIANT         |
|----------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Abbà <i>m</i>  | Àbbaatii <i>m</i>  | Ummà <i>f</i>    | Ûmmaatii <i>f</i>  |
| Bàaba <i>m</i> | Bàabaatii <i>m</i> | Yàlwa <i>m/f</i> | Yàlwaatii <i>f</i> |
| Gàrbà <i>m</i> | Gàrbatii <i>m</i>  |                  |                    |

This hypocoristic type expresses affection, endearment, warmth, and a positive attitude toward the person referred to. The diminutive aspect is minimal in this case, being relegated to the background. The forms are used primarily by men with children.<sup>7</sup>

**3.3. Type C: suffix *-aloo* ( ~ *-alaa*).** The basic HC suffix employed in type C, given in (4), is *-aloo* with an all-H tone melody. (*Aa'íloo* is slightly irregular in preserving the final root vowel in place of the *a* of the suffix.) We can offer no explanation about why the suffix appears sometimes with final *-aa*, rather than *-oo*, and particularly why *Jummàlaa* has HLH tone rather than the all-H pattern. The examples *Mammadoo* and *Mammadaa* illustrate a phenomenon commonly found in Hausa in which a root final consonant serves in place of a suffixal consonant, i.e., the suffix is sufficiently represented by the vowels and the tone. The form *Mammaloo* (rather than \**Mammanaloo* or \**Mammanoo*) is interesting in that it fits in with the notion that syllable-final nasals in Hausa tend to be weakened elements that are attached to the nucleus, rather than behaving like bona fide consonantal codas (see Newman 1992).

(4) Type C: suffix *-aloo* ( ~ *-alaa*)

| REGULAR NAME     | HC VARIANT          | REGULAR NAME     | HC VARIANT        |
|------------------|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Aa'ì <i>f</i>    | Aa'íloo <i>f</i>    | Kànde <i>f</i>   | Kandalaa <i>f</i> |
| Bintà <i>f</i>   | Bintaloo <i>f</i>   | Mammàn <i>m</i>  | Mammaloo <i>m</i> |
| Habiibà <i>f</i> | Habiibaloo <i>f</i> | Sandà <i>m</i>   | Sandaloo <i>m</i> |
| Jummai <i>f</i>  | Jummaloo <i>f</i>   | Mammadù <i>m</i> | Mammadoo <i>m</i> |
| Jummai <i>f</i>  | Jummàlaa <i>f</i>   | Mammadù <i>m</i> | Mammadaa <i>m</i> |

This HC type is unusual in its usage. Unlike all the other HC formations, which are primarily used by adults and older children in addressing or referring to younger children, this type is used mostly by small children (especially girls) among themselves. With the exception of *Sandaloo* and *Mammaloo* (and the equivalent names *Mammadoo* and *Mammadaa*), all of the HC names of this type are female names. When used, the suffix has a playful, affectionate, sometimes teasing quality. It reflects the bond that exists among young girls and their friends. As is probably true in many cultures of the world, such bonds of affection are less common and less overt among boys than among girls.

**3.4. Type D: suffix *-lle*.** This type, given in (5), employs a high tone suffix *-lle* that is tonally nonintegrating, i.e., the suffix has its own specific tone while the stems preserve their lexical tone. The suffix in *Àlilli* is slightly irregular in undergoing assimilation to the previous vowel. The surface form of the example *Kàbille* is probably due to assimilation and simplification of the abutting sequences of *ĩ* followed by *l*.

(5) Type D: suffix *-lle*

| REGULAR NAME |          | HC VARIANT |          | REGULAR NAME |          | HC VARIANT |          |
|--------------|----------|------------|----------|--------------|----------|------------|----------|
| Àli          | <i>m</i> | Àlilli     | <i>m</i> | Kaawù/Kàawu  | <i>m</i> | Kàawulle   | <i>m</i> |
| Bàaba        | <i>m</i> | Bàaballe   | <i>m</i> | Yaa'ù        | <i>m</i> | Yaa'ulle   | <i>m</i> |
| Hajiyaa      | <i>f</i> | Hajiyalle  | <i>f</i> | Kàbíř        | <i>m</i> | Kàbille    | <i>m</i> |

Type D forms connote diminutiveness, affection, warmth, respect, and the idea of being cherished. It emphasizes a degree of familiarity and closeness that is not normally shown to strangers or nonfamily members. These are the forms that could best be translated as 'my dear little X'. They are used primarily by women.

**3.5. Type E: suffix *-(a)le*.** Tonally, this type, shown in (6) below, is the least regular HC form. All of the forms use the same *-(a)le* suffix, but there is no predictability, as far as we can determine, regarding the tone of the HC form. The length of the penultimate vowel seems to be determined by rhythmic length polarity, i.e., if the initial vowel is short, the penult is long; whereas if the initial syllable is long, the penult is short (cf. *Uwàale* vs. *Kàakalè*). Given the pervasive influence of syllable weight in Hausa, one would, however, have expected *Baffàale* and *Abbàale* to occur with a penultimate short *a*, which they do not.<sup>8</sup>

(6) Type E: suffix *-(a)le*

| REGULAR NAME |          | HC VARIANT |          | REGULAR NAME |            | HC VARIANT |          |
|--------------|----------|------------|----------|--------------|------------|------------|----------|
| Abbà         | <i>m</i> | Abbàale    | <i>m</i> | Gàmbo        | <i>m/f</i> | Gambalè    | <i>m</i> |
| Àli          | <i>m</i> | Alèele     | <i>m</i> | Iyà          | <i>f</i>   | Ìyàale     | <i>f</i> |
| Bàaba        | <i>m</i> | Bàabalè    | <i>m</i> | Kàaka        | <i>m/f</i> | Kàakalè    | <i>m</i> |
| Baffà        | <i>m</i> | Baffàale   | <i>m</i> | Ûbaa         | <i>m</i>   | Ûbaalè     | <i>m</i> |
| Baawà        | <i>m</i> | Baawale    | <i>m</i> | Uwa          | <i>f</i>   | Uwàale     | <i>f</i> |

Semantically, this type has the same connotations as type D, with which it is morphologically clearly related, the difference being that this type is used primarily by men. Note that many of these names (e.g., *Abbà*, *Bàaba*, *Ûbaa* 'father'; *Iyà*, *Uwa* 'mother') are derived from kinship terms, which would be used by a man to avoid using the real personal names of senior relatives.

**3.6. Type F: suffix *-ndi*.** This small class, which is also used primarily by men, is semantically essentially the same as type E. There is no way to know from the few examples whether the difference in tone between the LLH and HHH forms is due to the weight of the initial syllable or to the lexical tone of the basic name.

(7) Type F: suffix *-ndi*

| REGULAR NAME     | HC VARIANT        | REGULAR NAME   | HC VARIANT |
|------------------|-------------------|----------------|------------|
| Bàaba <i>m</i>   | Bàabàndi <i>m</i> | Lawàn <i>m</i> | Lawandim   |
| Kàaka <i>m/f</i> | Kàakàndi <i>m</i> |                |            |

**3.7. Type G: suffix *-ùwaa*.** The ending *-ùwaa* is a tonally nonintegrating suffix with inherent LH tone.<sup>9</sup> The pair of forms built on names ending in LH tone are aberrant in two respects. First, the tone of the suffix is HL, rather than LH; second, the final vowel is short, rather than long (cf. *Kyàlluwà* vs. *Duudùwaa*). Examples are given in (8).

(8) Type G: suffix *-ùwaa*

| REGULAR NAME       | HC VARIANT            | REGULAR NAME       | HC VARIANT            |
|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Àudoodo <i>m</i>   | Àudoodùwaa <i>m</i>   | Kulù <i>f</i>      | Kulùwaa <i>f</i>      |
| Bintù <i>f</i>     | Bintùwaa <i>f</i>     | Kulùulu <i>f</i>   | Kulùuluwà <i>f</i>    |
| Bintuutu <i>f</i>  | Bintuutùwaa <i>f</i>  | Kyàllu <i>f</i>    | Kyàlluwà <i>f</i>     |
| Duudù <i>f</i>     | Duudùwaa <i>f</i>     | Sà'aadatù <i>f</i> | Sà'aadatùwaa <i>f</i> |
| Hàdiizatù <i>f</i> | Hàdiizatùwaa <i>f</i> | Shatù <i>f</i>     | Shatùwaa <i>f</i>     |
| Hànnatù <i>f</i>   | Hànnatùwaa <i>f</i>   | Tàlaatù <i>f</i>   | Tàlaatùwaa <i>f</i>   |
| Hànsatù <i>f</i>   | Hànsatùwaa <i>f</i>   | Tatù <i>f</i>      | Tatùwaa <i>f</i>      |
| Kàbīr <i>m</i>     | Kàbīrùwaa <i>m</i>    | Ùmmārūuŕu <i>m</i> | Ùmmārūuŕùwaa <i>m</i> |

Unlike the other HC types, this formative can be identified with another suffix that functions productively in the language, namely, the feminine ending, e.g., *bàkanò*/*bàkanùwaa* 'a Kano man/Kano woman'; *dùkuukùu*/*dùkuukùwaa* 'glum, hesitant m/f'. The development of this HC type is undoubtedly related to the phenomenon described as "overt characterization" (Newman 1979). As is well known (see, e.g., Parsons 1963), Hausa has a feminine suffix *-(u)waa* (= *-(i)yaa*) that serves to form feminine nouns and adjectives from corresponding masculine forms. Historically, Hausa underwent a process of overt characterization whereby the feminine suffix was added to nouns that were already feminine, but not overtly marked as such, e.g., \**yèekò* [+f] > *yèek-ùwaa* 'proclamation'. Since almost all feminine nouns in Hausa now end in the vowel *-a*, feminine names such as *Duudù* or *Hànsatù* could be said to be inadequately characterized. Thus, it is only natural that the *-uwaa* suffix used with common nouns should be employed with personal names to add a feminine/attractive quality to them.

This HC construction is used primarily by women and, in keeping with the origin of the suffix, most of the names are feminine. Mothers, aunts, and especially grandmothers use these forms to address their young toddlers and girls, because doing so makes the names sound more affectionately feminine. Certainly, the difference between *Hànsatù* and *Hànsatùwaa* is that the former sounds less feminine (and less affectionate) than the latter. It is not entirely clear what connotations these HC forms have in the few cases where the feminine-like suffix is used with masculine names. The use of an HC name such as *Kàbiiṛùwaa* by a grandmother would probably be affectionate, and not disparaging, whereas—and this describes a real case—when a group of children kept referring to a physically disabled, somewhat daft man as *Ûmmàṛuuṛùwaa*, a sense of ridicule was intended.

**4. Double hypocoristics.** In a certain number of cases, as one might have noticed from examples included earlier, hypocoristics are built on names that are themselves already HC forms. The tone pattern of the doubly marked forms is determined by the last added, outside formative. Similarly, the meaning of the output HC form overrides the meaning and usage of the HC form on which it is based. There are three groups of such forms.

The first group, given in (9) below, is a form of double hypocoristic with final reduplication. In this group there are two examples of HC forms of type E (which employ the suffix *-(a)le*) that undergo suffixal reduplication (type A). Note that the doubly-marked type A forms are tonally regular even though the type E forms have unpredictable tone.

(9) Double hypocoristics with final reduplication

| REGULAR NAME |          | HC VARIANT-1 |          | HC VARIANT-2 |          |
|--------------|----------|--------------|----------|--------------|----------|
| Iyà          | <i>f</i> | Ìyàale       | <i>f</i> | Ìyàaleele    | <i>f</i> |
| Ûbaa         | <i>m</i> | Ûbaalè       | <i>m</i> | Ûbàaleele    | <i>m</i> |

The second group is a form of double hypocoristic with final *-ùwaa*. In the four examples, given in (10) below, the suffix *-ùwaa* (type G) is added to type A reduplicative HC forms.

(10) Double hypocoristics with final *-ùwaa*

| REGULAR NAME |          | HC VARIANT-1 |          | HC VARIANT-2 |          |
|--------------|----------|--------------|----------|--------------|----------|
| Audù         | <i>m</i> | Àdoodo       | <i>m</i> | Àdoodùwaa    | <i>m</i> |
| Bintù        | <i>f</i> | Bintuutu     | <i>f</i> | Bintuutùwaa  | <i>f</i> |
| Kulù         | <i>f</i> | Kulùulu      | <i>f</i> | Kulùuluwà    | <i>f</i> |
| Ûmmaṛù       | <i>m</i> | Ûmmaṛuuṛu    | <i>m</i> | Ûmmaṛuuṛùwaa | <i>m</i> |

The third group is a form of double hypocoristic with final *-iya(a)*. In the three examples, given in (11) below, HC forms of type E with the suffix *-(a)le*



add a suffix *-iyà(a)*, which qualifies as a subvariant of the type G *-ùwaa* suffix. This formation is unusual in that the *-iyà(a)* suffix never produces hypocoristics on its own, but only does so in these doubly-marked forms. The distinction in final vowel length between the masculine and feminine examples is inexplicable.<sup>10</sup> The name *Alililiyà* seems to be a blend of sorts in that it takes its tone from the intermediate HC form, but its vowel quality from the underlying name. In terms of meaning and usage, these forms are very similar to the *-ùwaa* forms, but express an even greater lullaby-like, soothing quality.

(11) Double hypocoristics with final *-iyà(a)*

| REGULAR NAME |          | HC VARIANT-1 |          | HC VARIANT-2 |          |
|--------------|----------|--------------|----------|--------------|----------|
| Àli          | <i>m</i> | Alèele       | <i>m</i> | Alililiyà    | <i>m</i> |
| Ûbaa         | <i>m</i> | Ûbaalè       | <i>m</i> | Ûbaaliyà     | <i>m</i> |
| Uwa          | <i>f</i> | Uwàale       | <i>f</i> | Uwàaliyàa    | <i>f</i> |

**5. Conclusion.** In this paper we have provided a general description of hypocoristic personal names in Hausa. We have distinguished seven different types of hypocoristics. We have shown how they are formed and have outlined what they express and by whom they tend to be used. In describing the form, we have particularly noted whether the HC affix carried an overall tone melody (i.e., was tone-integrating) or whether the tone of the derived form took into account the tone of the basic name. Finally, we documented double hypocoristics, i.e., names in which an HC formative was added to a name that was already HC in form.

This is the first study we are aware of that describes hypocoristic names in an African language. We hope that it will provide valuable data for scholars interested in general problems of onomastics, prosodic morphology, tonology, and expressive language, and that it will stimulate future work on this topic in the field of African linguistics.

Appendix: List of Hausa Names with Corresponding Hypocoristic Variants

| NAME                 | MEANING                                     | HYPOCORISTIC FORMS  |
|----------------------|---|---|
| Aa'ì <i>f</i>        | Proper name                                 | Aa'ìloo <i>f</i>  |
| Àamadù <i>m</i>      | Proper name                                 | Àamàduudu <i>m</i>  |
| Àhàjì <i>m</i>       | Nickname < pilgrim                          | Àhàjiji <i>m</i>  |
| Àlì <i>m</i>         | Proper name                                 | Àlèele <i>m</i> , Àlilli <i>m</i> , Àliliyà <i>m</i>        |
| Abbà <i>m</i>        | Nickname, boy named after grandfather       | Abbaatii <i>m</i> , Abbàale <i>m</i>                        |
| Audù <i>m</i>        | Short for any name beginning with Abdu      | Àuduudu <i>m</i> , Àudoodo <i>m</i> , Àudoodùwaa <i>m</i>   |
| Baawà <i>m</i>       | Nickname, i.e., slave of God                | Baawale <i>m</i>  |
| Bàaba <i>m</i>       | Nickname, boy named after grandfather       | Bàabalè <i>m</i> , Bàabàndi <i>m</i> , Bàabaatii <i>m</i>   |
| Bàlaa <i>m</i>       | Nickname, boy born on Wednesday             | Bàleele <i>m</i>  |
| Baffà <i>m</i>       | Nickname, boy named after great-uncle       | Baffàale <i>m</i>   |
| Bellò <i>m</i>       | Nickname for Muhammad                       | Belloolo <i>m</i>   |
| Bintà <i>f</i>       | Nickname for Fatima                         | Bintaloo <i>f</i>   |
| Bintù <i>f</i>       | Nickname for Fatima                         | Bintutu <i>f</i> , Bintùwaa <i>f</i> , Bintutuùwaa <i>f</i> |
| Duudù <i>f</i>       | Nickname for Kande                          | Duuduùwaa <i>f</i>  |
| Gàmbò <i>m/f</i>     | Child born after twins                      | Gambalè <i>m</i>  |
| Garbà <i>m</i>       | Nickname for Abubakar                       | Garbaatii <i>m</i>  |
| Habiibà <i>f</i>     | Proper name                                 | Habiibaloo <i>f</i>   |
| Hàdiizatù <i>f</i>   | Proper name                                 | Hàdiizatùwaa <i>f</i>                                       |
| Hànnatù <i>f</i>     | Proper name                                 | Hànnatùwaa <i>f</i>   |
| Hànsatù <i>f</i>     | Proper name                                 | Hànsatùwaa <i>f</i>   |
| Hajiyaa <i>f</i>     | Nickname < pilgrim                          | Hajiyalle <i>f</i>  |
| Ìndoo <i>f</i>       | Nickname for A'ishatu                       | Ìndoodo <i>f</i>  |
| Ìlìlà <i>m</i>       | Short for Isma'ila                          | Ìlileele <i>m</i>   |
| Inuu <i>m</i>        | Short for Inuwa                             | Inuunu <i>m</i>   |
| Iyà <i>f</i>         | Nickname, girl named after grandmother      | Iyàale <i>f</i> , Iyàaleele <i>f</i>                        |
| Jummai <i>f</i>      | Nickname, girl born on Friday               | Jummaloo <i>f</i> , Jummalaa <i>f</i>                       |
| Kaawù/Kàawu <i>m</i> | Nickname, boy named after great-uncle       | Kaawulle <i>m</i>   |
| Kàaka <i>m/f</i>     | Nickname, boy named after great-grandfather | Kaakalè <i>m</i> , Kaakàndi <i>m</i>                        |

Kàbĩr *m*  
 Kànde *f*  
 Kulù *f*  
 Kyàllu *f*  
 Laadì *f*  
 Lawàn *m*  
 Màatii *m*  
 Mammadù *m*  
 Mammàn *m*  
 Mùdde *m*  
 Saalè *m*  
 Sà'aadatù *f*  
 Sandà *m*  
 Shatù *f*  
 Tàlaatù *f*  
 Tatù *f*  
 Ûbaa *m*  
 Ûmmañù *m*  
 Ummà *f*  
 Uwa *f*  
 Yaa'ù *m*  
 Yaarò *m*  
 Yalwa *m/f*

Nickname for Muhammad  
 Nickname, girl born after two or more boys  
 Nickname for Hauwa  
 Nickname  
 Nickname, girl born on Sunday  
 Nickname for Muhammad  
 Nickname, boy born after two or more girls  
 Variant of Muhammad  
 Variant of Muhammad  
 Short for Mud'dafa (= Mustapha)  
 Short for Salihu  
 Proper name  
 Nickname for Umaru  
 Short for A'ishatu  
 Nickname, girl born on Tuesday  
 Short for Talatu  
 Nickname, boy named after grandfather  
 Proper name  
 Nickname, girl named after grandmother  
 Nickname, girl named after grandmother  
 Short for Armaya'u  
 Nickname, boy with small physique  
 Nickname, child born in times of prosperity

Kàbĩrùwaa *m*, Kàbille *m*  
 Kandalaà *f*  
 Kulùlu *f*, Kulùwaa *f*, Kuliùluwà *f*  
 Kyalluwà *f*  
 Làadiidi *f*  
 Lawandi *m*  
 Maa'tiiti *m*  
 Mammadoo *m*, Mammadaa *m*  
 Mammaloo *m*  
 Mùddeede *m*  
 Sàaleele *m*  
 Sà'aadatùwaa *f*  
 Sandaloo *m*  
 Shatùwaa *f*  
 Tàlaatùwaa *f*  
 Tatùwaa *f*  
 Ûbaalè *m*, Ûbaaleele *m*, Ûbaaliyà *m*  
 Ûmmàruuru *m*, Ûmmàruuruwaa *m*  
 Ûmmaatii *f*, Ûmmakàtii *f*, Ûmmakàtiiti *f*  
 Uwàale *f*, Uwàaliyaa *f*  
 Yaa'ulle *m*  
 Yaaroooro *m*  
 Yàlwaatii *f*

### Notes

*Acknowledgments.* For F. W. Parsons (9 February 1908–2 November 1993), in memoriam. This paper is an outgrowth of a Hausa Reference Grammar project supported by grants from the U.S. Department of Education (PO–17A10037), the National Endowment for the Humanities (RT–21236), and the National Science Foundation (DBS–9107103). An earlier draft was presented at the Twenty-fourth Annual Conference on African Linguistics, Ohio State University, 23–25 July 1993. We are grateful to Dr. Ismail Junaidu for comments and constructive criticism.

1. Allowing for possible oversights on our part, the only study we can cite that explicitly deals with hypocoristics in a sub-Saharan language is the paper by Noye (1980), which is not concerned with personal names.

2. Key to transcription: Long vowels are indicated by double letters. L(ow) tone is marked  $\grave{a}(a)$ , F(alling) tone is marked  $\hat{a}(a)$ , and H(igh) tone is unmarked. The symbol  $\tilde{r}$  represents the tap/roll, which contrasts in Hausa with the unmarked flap  $r$ .

3. Ruķe-Draviņa (1977:239), for example, reports that in Latvian, in order to express the personal feelings of the speaker toward the addressee or the subject matter that is referred to, certain hypocoristic/diminutive suffixes can be added to almost all words: nouns, adjectives, and even verbs.

4. One can think here of Jimmy (= James Earl) Carter, who carried his HC name all the way to the presidency of the United States.

5. Dr. Ismail Junaidu, a native Hausa speaker of the Katsina dialect, which differs somewhat from Standard Hausa, pronounced HC forms with a high front vowel with long  $-ii$ ; he pronounced names with other final vowels with the expected short vowel, e.g., *Làadiidii*, but *Sàaleele*.

6. The reduplicative  $-VCV$  functions as a “tone-integrating” affix (Newman 1986), i.e., one in which the suffix carries a tone melody that overrides underlying lexical tone.

7. The affective value of this suffix perhaps has an etymological explanation. Although there is no suffix  $-tii$  in Arabic with a similar function, the word *Ummaatii* ‘my mother’ could have been derived from Arabic *umma* (containing a surface [t] in nonfinal position) plus the possessive pronoun  $-y$ , with the meaning ‘my mother’. As the term *ummaatii* continued to be used in Hausa, the final  $-tii$  came to be misinterpreted as an endearment suffix. As such, it was extended to other names, resulting in HC derivatives like *Yàlwaatii* (< *Yàlwa*) and even masculine names such as *Gàrbaatii* (< *Gàrbà*).

8. Interestingly, Dr. Junaidu, from Katsina, allowed *Abbale* (with all-H tone) as an alternative to *Abbàale*.

9. Actually, the *u* in its feminine usage has copy tone, rather than L tone, and viewed historically, the situation is much more complicated than outlined here (see Newman 1979); but the treatment of  $-ùwaa$  as a suffix with fixed LH tone is accurate enough for present purposes.

10. In Katsina, all of these forms have a long final vowel.

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